

1 In the claims:

2 1. A user interface system, comprising:

3 a register configured to collect resource information from one or more resources  
4 coupled to a communications network;

5 an options module configured to provide resource options based on the collected  
6 resource information;

7 a user profiler configured to construct profiles for clients coupled to the network;  
8 and

9 a user interface builder configured to construct user interfaces based on the user  
10 profiles and the resource options, wherein the user interface builder may be configured to  
11 construct a unique user interface for each of the clients coupled to the network.

12 2. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein the unique user interface is provided  
13 to the client.

14 3. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein the unique user interface is retained by  
15 the user interface system.

16 4. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein the user interface system exists as a  
17 node in a local area network.

18 5. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein the user interface system exists as an  
19 Internet web site.

20 6. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein one client of the clients is a local area  
21 network, the local area network comprising a plurality of network computers, and wherein  
22 the user interface builder is configured to provide a unique user interface for one or more of  
23 the network computers.

24 7. The user interface system of claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises a user  
25 interface to a printer driver.

26 8. The user interface system of claim 7, wherein the user interface comprises a  
27 hierarchical menu of printer option screens, wherein one or more of the printer option  
28 screens is provided dynamically based on user preferences, printer capabilities, and user  
29 print option selection.

30 9. A method for controlling usage of resources in a computer network, comprising:

1 receiving a job request from a client in the network;  
2 selecting a customized user interface, wherein the user interface is based on  
3 preferences of the client; and  
4 returning all or part of an application program to the client, the application program  
5 used for controlling a resource, the application program based on the user preferences and  
6 capabilities of the resources in the network, wherein the customized user interface provides  
7 user access to the application program.

8 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the resources are printers, and wherein the  
9 application program is a printer driver.

10 11. The method of claim 9, wherein the user interface is an interface to a printer driver.

11 12. The method of claim 9, further comprising:  
12 determining if the client is a new client; and  
13 sending a default user interface to the new client.

14 13. The method of claim 9, wherein the job request is received at an Internet web site.

15 14. The method of claim 9, wherein the job request is received at a node in a local area  
16 network.

17 15. The method of claim 9, further comprising:  
18 sending the customized user interface to the client;  
19 receiving a modification to the client preferences; and  
20 sending a modified user interface to the client, wherein the modified user interface is  
21 based on the modification to the client preferences.

22 16. The method of claim 9, further comprising:  
23 recording selected client preferences; and  
24 determining a set of usage metrics based on the recorded client preferences.

25 17. A method for controlling printing functions in a distributed computer network, the  
26 network comprising a plurality of clients and one or more print devices, comprising:  
27 receiving a print request from a client;  
28 determining if the client is a new client;

1 sending a user interface to the client, wherein if the client is a new client, the user  
2 interface is a default user interface, and wherein if the client is not a new client, the user  
3 interface is a customized user interface;

4 receiving changes to the user interface; and

5 returning the changed user interface to the client.

6 18. The method of claim 17, wherein the customized user interface is based on  
7 preferences of the client.

8 19. The method of claim 18, further comprising recording the client preferences as  
9 usage metrics.

10 20. The method of claim 17, further comprising selecting a printer to complete the print  
11 request.

12 21. A computer-readable program storage device, tangibly embodying a program of  
13 instruction executable by a computer to perform method steps in a computer network for  
14 providing an extensible use interface, the method steps, comprising:

15 receiving a job request from a client in the network;

16 selecting a customized user interface, wherein the user interface is based on  
17 preferences of the client; and

18 returning all or part of an application program to the client, the application program  
19 used for controlling a resource, the application program based on the user preferences and  
20 capabilities of the resources in the network, wherein the customized user interface provides  
21 user access to the application program.

22 22. The computer-readable program storage device of claim 21, wherein the method  
23 steps further comprise:

24 determining if the client is a new client; and

25 sending a default user interface to the new client.

26 23. The computer-readable program storage device of claim 21, wherein the method  
27 steps further comprise:

28 sending the customized user interface to the client;

29 receiving a modification to the client preferences; and

1            sending a modified user interface to the client, wherein the modified user interface is  
2        based on the modification to the client preferences.

3        24.    The computer-readable storage device of claim 21, wherein the method steps  
4        further comprise:  
5            recording selected client preferences; and  
6            determining a set of usage metrics based on the recorded client preferences.

7        25.    A user interface system, comprising:  
8            means for collecting resource information from one or more resources coupled to a  
9        communications network;  
10          means for providing resource options based on the collected resource information;  
11          means for constructing profiles for clients coupled to the network; and  
12          means for constructing user interfaces based on the user profiles and the resource  
13        options, wherein the means for constructing the user interfaces construct a unique user  
14        interface for each of the clients coupled to the communications network.